

Application No. 10/634370
Page 2

Amendment
Attorney Docket No. S63.2N-7132-US03

Amendments To The Specification:

Please replace the paragraph on page 9, which starts on line 4, with the following amended paragraph:

Where the materials removal is accomplished by grinding with a benchtop grinder, the tubing segment 120 may be supported by a die of suitable length such as that shown in Fig. 4, that is fixed to the grinding machine. Desirably, the die, shown generally at 162, will be tubular with half of the die cut away in the middle third 166 of the die to provide access to the segment. The first 170 and second ends 174 of the die have a bore therethrough to allow the segment 120 to be held therein. Also desirably, there will be a minimal clearance between the outer diameter (OD) of the segment and the inner diameter (ID) of the die. A mandrel 200 may also be used in place of or in addition to the die for support of the tubing segment 120 as needed.

Please replace the paragraph on page 8, which starts on line 10, with the following amended paragraph:

The material may be removed from the proximal and/or distal end portions of the segment by grinding. While any suitable grinding process may be employed, the segment desirably will be subject to a centerless grind. A schematic of a centerless grinder is shown in Fig. 3. Typically, a segment 120, supported on rest blade 122 and/or mandrel 200, is fed at one end into a centerless grinder, shown generally at 150, and guided between two grinding wheels (work wheel 154 and regulating wheel 158) that rotate in the same direction at different speeds. Segment 120 rotates as a result of its contact with regulating wheel 158 and is ground to a specified diameter or wall thickness dictated by the distance between the faces 154a and 158a of the two grinding wheels. One of the grinding wheels, typically the regulating wheel, may be moved so as to vary the distance between the faces of the grinding wheels during the grinding process. The segment advances through the grinding machine as a result of its contact with the grinding wheels. Specifically, one of the grinding wheels, typically the regulating wheel, rotates along an axis that is almost parallel to the axis of rotation of the segment being ground, but

Application No. 10/634370
Page 3

Amendment
Attorney Docket No. 563.2N-7132-US03

slightly skewed in a vertical plane, so that its contact with the segment causes the segment to move forward through the machine. A suitable centerless grinder which may be used is the Royal Master Grinder model number TG12X3.